

7 MAR 1995

21

1 Case Number 950109CCC1218		2 Investigator ID 8189		3 Office Code 800		EPIDEMIOLOGIC INVESTIGATION REPORT
4 Accident date 941023		5 IDI initiated 950117				
6 Synopsis of Accident or complaint This investigation involved a residential fire in a college dormitory. The occupant sat some groceries in thin plastic grocery bags on and around an operating toaster oven. The heat from the oven caused the plastic grocery bags to melt and smolder. No injuries occurred.						
7 Location Dormitory 10			8 City Chapel Hill		9 State NC	
10a First Product toaster oven 0216			11a Trade/Brand name/Model model: TR0400TY1 brand: Black & Decker Mfr.: Black & Decker Mfr., East Joppa Rd., Towson, MD 21204			
10b Second Product plastic bag 1130			11b Trade/Brand name/Model unknown			
12 Age of Victim 999		13 Sex No inj. 9		14 Disposition No injury 0		15 Injury diagnosis No injury 71
16 Body part No injury 99		17 Respondents Fire Dept. Unv. Safety Off. 2		18 Investigation type Telephone 2		19 Time spent 6.0
20 Attachments Multi 9		21 Case Source Newspaper 05		22 Reviewed by 8342 950301		
23 Permission to disclose names (Non-NEISS cases only) ___ CPSC may disclose my name ___x___ CPSC may not disclose my name						
24 Narrative				25 Regional Director review date 3-1-95		

MFR/PRVLBR NOTIFIED 3/1/95

☒ No Comments made

☒ Comments attached

☒ Excisions/Revisions

☒ Firm has not requested further notice



NOTE: The information contained in this report was provided by the local responding fire department and the University safety officer. I was never able to reach the owner of the toaster oven involved in the incident.

PRE-INCIDENT:

This residential fire occurred in one of the university's dormitories. The fire occurred on Oct. 23, 1994 at approximately 4:30 pm. The product involved in the fire was a Black and Decker brand toaster oven. The toaster oven was sitting on a desk. The occupant stated to fire investigator's that she last used the toaster oven around 9:00 am. on the day of the fire. The occupant did not know where the toaster oven had been purchased, but it was new, less than one year old. Prior to the incident the occupant had not experienced any problems with the toaster oven.

The occupant went grocery shopping on the day of the fire and returned to her room around 3:00 pm. She had purchased some groceries and they were bagged in thin plastic grocery bags. When she returned to her room she sat the groceries on and beside the oven. The groceries were left in the bags and the occupant left about 10 minutes later. The occupant did not return to her room until after the fire.

INCIDENT:

A passerby saw smoke coming from around the occupants window. Authorities were alerted and the fire department was called. When the fire department arrived they found that the toaster oven was operating and the heat from the oven had melted the plastic grocery bags and caused them to smolder. There were no actual flames.

POST-INCIDENT:

Removal of the bags from around the toaster oven and turning the oven off eliminated the fire. The smoke was removed from the room by the fire department. They did not remove the toaster oven. The damage was minimal and the university's insurance company was not involved. The occupant believes she may have inadvertently turned the toaster oven on as sat the groceries down.

PRODUCT IDENTIFICATION:

The toaster oven involved in the incident was a Black and Decker model TR0400TY1. No other product information was available as I was never able to speak to the owner. The safety officer for the university, on my behalf, went by the occupant's room and talked to her. He was not able to get any additional product information as the occupant discarded the toaster oven following the incident.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 - Fire Report

FDID 0168102 Department Name Chapel Hill FD County Exp. Incident No. 576

Grid 10-B

Mo. 110 Day 23 Yr. 94 Day of Week 1 Alarm Time 11633 Time Out 11633 Arr. Time 11635 Time In 11735 Tot. Time Out 11612

INCIDENT ADDRESS OR LOCATION Street Manning Drive City CHAPEL HILL State NC Zip 27519

OCCUPANT NAME Last, First HINTON JAMES DORM. Phone ()

OWNER NAME Last, First UNC Phone ()

OWNER ADDRESS Street Raleigh Rd. City CHAPEL HILL State NC Zip 27519

METHOD OF ALARM FROM PUBLIC 1 Telephone 2 Municipal alarm system 3 Private alarm system 4 Radio 5 Verbal 6 Home dialer 7 Tie-line 8 Voice signal: Fire alarm system 9 Other 11

TYPE OF SITUATION FOUND 11 Structure fire 12 Any fire outside a structure where the material burning has a value 13 Vehicle fire 14 Trees, brush, grass fire 15 Refuse fire (material burning has no value) 16 Explosion, no after-fire 17 Outside spill, leak with fire

19 Fire/explosion not classified 20 Overpressure rupture (no combustion) 30 Rescue 32 EMS only 40 Hazardous condition 50 Service call 60 Good intent call 71 False malicious 73 False malfunction 74 False unintentional 99 Other situation found 11

TYPE OF ACTION TAKEN 1 Extinguishment 2 Rescue 3 Investigation 4 Remove hazard 5 Standby 6 Salvage 7 Medical Aid 8 Fill in, move up 9 Cancelled enroute 0 Water supply 3 Primary 4 Secondary

REQUIRES COMPLETION OF INJURY & FATALITY REPORT No. Incident-related injuries Fire Srv. 10 Other 10 No. Incident-related fatalities Fire Srv. 10 Other 10 Is juvenile suspected in ignition? YES NO

Is property abandoned or vacant? YES NO

Fill in this section if "TYPE OF SITUATION FOUND" is 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 19 ONLY (14, Optional) (Refer to coding sheet)

Ignition Factor OPERATIONAL DEFICIENCY 70 Area of Fire Origin Bedroom 21 Fixed Property Use Residential 400

Form of Heat of Ignition Electrical equipment 20 Type of Material Ignited plastic 40 Equipment Involved in Ignition Cooking equipment 20

If Heating Equipment Involved, Type of Fuel Used 1 Kerosene 4 Wood 7 Natural Gas 2 LPG 5 Coal 8 Gasoline 3 Electric 6 Oil 9 Other 0 Not Apply 0

CONDITION UPON ARRIVAL 1 Overheat 2 Smoldering 3 Open flame 8 Out on arrival 8

MOBILE PROPERTY TYPE 11 Automobile 12 Bus 13 All-terrain vehicle 14 Motor home 15 Travel trailer 16 Mobile home 20 Freight road transport 30 Rail transport 40 Water transport 50 Air transport 60 Heavy equipment 70 Special vehicles, containers 99 Other mobile property types 00 Not Apply 00

PROPERTY DAMAGE CLASSIFICATIONS 1 \$1-99 2 \$100-999 3 \$1,000-9,999 4 \$10,000-24,999 5 \$25,000-49,999 6 \$50,000-149,999 7 \$150,000-499,999 8 \$500,000-999,999 9 \$1,000,000 or more 0 NO DOLLAR LOSS 9 Value 2 Damaged Estimated Structural Damage Estimated Contents Damage 1200

If Mobile Property Yr. Make Model St. Lic. Number Serial Number/VIN

If Equipment Involved in Ignition Yr. Item Make Model Serial Number

TOASTER Black + Decker TRO400TY1 TRO400TY1

NO. OF STORIES 1 Single Story 2 Two Stories 3 3 or 4 4 5 or 6 5 7 to 10 6 11 to 20 7 21 to 50 8 Over 50 9 Below Grade

EXTENT OF DAMAGE 1 Confined to the object of origin 2 Confined to part of room or area of origin 3 Confined to room of origin 4 Confined to fire-rated comp. of origin 5 Confined to floor of origin 6 Confined to structure of origin 7 Extended beyond structure of origin 9 No damage of this type

CONSTRUCTION TYPE 1 Fire resistive 2 Noncombustible 3 Heavy timber 4 Ordinary 5 Frame 0 Other 1

SPRINKLER PERFORMANCE 1 Equipment operated 2 Equipment in service, did not operate 3 Equipment present: fire too small to operate 4 No equipment present 9 Equipment not in service 8

DETECTOR PERFORMANCE 1 Present 2 Not Present If Present, Type of Closest Unit 1 Smoke 2 Heat Power Supply 1 Battery 2 A/C

1 In room of fire: operated 2 Not in room of fire: operated 3 In room of fire: did not operate 4 Not in room of fire: did not operate 5 In room: fire too small to operate 9 Not classified (Not Apply) 2

Fire Referred for Investigation to: AC Robertson YES NO

Building Height 5 Level of Fire Origin 5

Officer in Charge (name, position) NEVILLE, FEO Member Making Report Neville

Remarks:

DEPARTMENT COPY

Attachment 1
9501090001218
2129

Allen Dobbin

ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION REQUEST FORM

9m
1-17-95

Document Number N4C-0147 BO toaster oven

Date of Incident 10/23/94

Category I.D. SECT 15/1995

Follow-Up Requested

Hazard Analysis

Section 15

Type Follow-Up Requested

Telephone Call

or

On-Site

Headquarters Contact R. Rauchschwall

Assignment Message Obtain toaster oven for engineering
evaluation - Complete on-site only if toaster
oven is still available. Obtain fire dept. report.

Person(s) to Contact ① Chapel Hill fire marshals
② Resident assistant

Guideline

Requested By RR

Task Number

950109 CCC 1218

Assigned to

N4C

Date

11/9/95

Renee

N4C-0147 A/B/C

DEC - 9 1994

OCT 24 94

Fire hits another dorm lounge

Weekend blazes prompt UNC officials to request SBI help

By RAY GRONBERG
The Chapel Hill Herald

CHAPEL HILL — A pair of weekend dormitory fires have prompted UNC officials to call for help from the State Bureau of Investigation.

Both fires occurred Saturday, but the call to the SBI didn't go out until after a 4 p.m. incident at Morrison dorm, UNC police Capt. W.L. Dunn said.

A smoldering newspaper left on a couch caused about \$100 worth of damage in the building's third-floor TV lounge, according to a statement from Chapel Hill Fire Department Capt. Bill Minton.

The Morrison incident followed an early-morning lounge fire at nearby Ehringhaus dorm that caused about \$25,000 in damage and forced students to evacuate for more than three hours.

It was the second fire at Ehringhaus this month.

UNC officials say they're concerned. "The first two [at Ehringhaus] appeared to be accidental, but the third one [at Morrison] appears suspicious," said Wayne Kuncel, UNC's director of housing. "When you see evidence of a burning newspaper on top of a cushion, you start to wonder."

Chapel Hill fire marshals and the UNC police are leading the investigation of Saturday's fires, according to a statement from UNC officials.

But Sunday afternoon provided yet another incident.

Chapel Hill firefighters were called to Hinton James dorm at about 4:35 p.m. when a toaster oven in a fifth-floor resident assistant's room started to smoke.

Preliminary indications were that no fire broke out, even though about 150 students had to evacuate for roughly 45 minutes while firefighters and UNC police checked out the situation.

What they found, firefighters said, was a malfunctioning appliance. The toaster oven's switch was off, but its coil was on and red-hot. The resident assistant living in the room had been gone for most of the day.

please see FIRE

9501090001218

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FIRES

FROM 1

Investigators attributed the Ehringhaus fires — the first occurring Oct. 9 in the sixth-floor lounge, the second at about 3 a.m. Saturday in the fifth-floor lounge — to carelessness and unattended cigarettes.

But UNC police responding to the Morrison fire found a half-burned and folded newspaper section lying on a couch. Kuncel said they also found two slightly charred bulletin board fliers on the floor of the nearby lobby.

Word — and worry — about the incidents at Morrison and Ehringhaus appear to have spread among students and their parents.

Chapel Hill Assistant Fire Chief David Lewis, who supervised firefighters at Hinton James Sunday, said he fielded calls "from about half the state" over the weekend. "Forty-seven irate parents, all thinking their children are in danger."

Residents aren't immune. Hinton James resident assistant Gillian Steinberg told

Lewis the recent alarms "are scaring people" while she waited on firefighters to give the all-clear signal Sunday.

Steinberg backed off that statement, however, when questioned further. "It's an annoyance more than anything else," she said.

University officials said in a statement Sunday that they've told residence hall staff members throughout the campus about the incidents at Morrison and Ehringhaus. They said they've also instructed hall staff to be alert for any suspicious activity.

Little word, however, seemed to have trickled down to the Hinton James staff by Sunday afternoon.

"All we've been told is that the lounges have been closed by someone higher than us," said resident assistant Robert Simes. "Nothing's been handed down yet."

Simes and Steinberg reported, however, that they've noticed that UNC police have stepped up foot patrols inside the dorms.